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Giving to the Lord from Principle.

The Lord's cause is promoted by contributions made to it of mind, muscle and money, and it is not necessary as far as the prosperity of the cause is concerned, to know by what motive these are contributed. This is plainly taught by Paul's language where he says: Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will: The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely. * * What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.—Phil. 1: 15—19.

God makes the wrath of man to praise him, and the energies that are expended for the purpose of promoting the cause of Christ are not lost to that cause, even if they are given from motives foreign to the cause itself. We allude to the methods frequently employed by churches in appealing to the appetite and love of social and, may we say, sensual pleasures, to raise funds for carrying on church work by such questionable methods as church fairs, oyster suppers and festive entertainments, as well as to the appeals that are often made to persons in a way as to cause them to give because of their love of ostentation and display; and we have even seen where money was given to the cause of Christ ostensibly from motives of rivalry and spite. For instance, a congregation had an old barn-like structure to worship in, and the more progressive members tried for years in vain to have the old building replaced by a new one. The wealthier members could not be moved to give their consent to the measure by any appeal that could be made to them on principles of love for the cause of Christ, but eventually the church became divided and the stronger barred out the weaker, who immediately built a nice commodious house of worship, which so incited the pride and emulation of the other party that they soon raised money to build a new house also.

Now, although the cause of Christ is made to prosper, no doubt, in this way, church houses are built and the ministry sustained by money raised in this manner, there is a feature about the matter which is very deplorable. Paul refers to it in his own case. He was very desirous of prosecuting the work before him unto its final conclusion, with *proper motive and zeal*, lest having preached to others he himself might become a castaway. It is this deplorable thought that the time and energy which is contributed under certain circumstances to the good cause may not be accredited to the contributor, that causes us to write on this subject. The thought that a person may preach a whole lifetime, or devote hundreds and perhaps thousands of dollars for the promotion of the cause of Christ as far as all human appearance is concerned, and then find in the end that he has no credit for anything in God's ledger is very distressing to contemplate.

The church is partly to blame for this. It has not done its duty, we fear, in teaching that giving to the Lord should be conducted from principle and not from impulse or from a desire for ostentation or anything of a similar character. Many, no doubt rest secure in the thought that because they have given a certain amount which they know has been used to build a church, or establish a mission, they have in this way discharged their duty. They will be deceived, and they should be plainly taught upon this subject now. Souls could be saved from perishing in this way, and besides, the habit of giving from principle should be cultivated because it alone will form a permanent basis upon which to establish efficient church work.

"What Harm is There in Saying Lord Caesar?"

When Polycarp, the martyr, was before his accusers, and threatened with death by fire, he was urgently pressed to deny Christ and avoid the sufferings that were ready to receive him. The condition of escape was easy and, in the situation, desirable; he was only asked to say, "Lord Cæsar," and sacrifice to idols. Certainly the exclamation was easy, and it is safe to surmise that the sacrifice which he was asked to offer was not a difficult work.

Well, what harm is there in saying, "Lord Cæsar?" What harm is there in burning a little blood upon a fire? They are deeds which, in themselves, would seem to carry little weight as a factor in the conditions of everlasting happiness. The conduct of Polycarp, answers in red letters of peculiar brilliancy: "Great harm."

The sum of the evil is, man-worship and idol-worship. We are to worship neither men nor idols. Man is only a creature, as the animals of the forest are, considered in his earthly relations, and is no more worthy or deserving of worship than they are. To bow in devotion to animals would be silly; to worship men is ungodly. Hero worship and creature service, are no part of Christian duty, or moral obligation, and he who engages therein is sowing seed that will yield a painful harvest.

The flesh and blood of animals are not burned upon altars as a sacrifice in civilized countries; yet much sacrifice is offered to assumed, created or imaginary gods. There is the god of covetousness, of fashion, of intemperance, of fame and ambition, which are receiving the profuse sacrifice of uncounted thousands. Upon the altars built in honor to those gods, can be found health, comfort, honesty, temperance, sobriety, humility, domestic felicity and moral purity. This class of sacrifice is more devastating in its effects, and more dangerous in its character than the creature service of exclaiming, Lord Cæsar, or burning blood could be. If that ancient martyr were present, and demanded to assume the practice of modern idolatry, he would again say: Eighty and six years have I served Him and He never did me wrong.

Census; Sensational, and Otherwise.

Elder Jesse Calvert, a representative German Baptist, in a sermon delivered in Waterloo, Iowa, recently, stated that they, the German Baptists, had a membership of 100,000, and that they had baptized during the year 2,000 members. These figures are exaggerations, of course, but accepting them as true what do we have? Simply this: That the German Baptist church, with a standing and prestige of over a century in the United States, and a list of about 2,000 preachers, has increased its membership at the rate of two per cent per annum during the year, not making any allowance for loss by death or otherwise. The German Baptists do not receive members in any way but by baptism so the 2,000 claimed by Eld. Calvert represents the whole number received. Now if only each one of the two thousand preachers would baptize one, it would make the two thousand claimed, but if each preacher would preach the funeral of one member during the year it would show as many losses by deaths as there were gains by baptisms, and if there would be no losses, only by death, there would be no real gain after all. But we have good assurance that they have been losing some members in other ways, and we doubt, therefore, whether their membership is multiplying as fast as we would desire.

The Brethren cause has been doing somewhat better. Our census, taken with reasonable accuracy, reports a gain of about 50 per cent. per annum since the Dayton convention, and we shall be disappointed if the per cent of gain this year will fall below 20 per cent. We do not say this boastingly, we simply make the comparison for the purpose of setting this matter right before our brotherhood and as a source of encouragement to the Brethren. If the Dunkard church since its organization in America, would have increased at the rate of 50 per cent., or even 20 per cent., annually, it would now cover the whole earth.

The Vindicator.

The April number of the *Vindicator* is before us, and we have read it through with much interest. The Editor defends his church against an insinuation made against it, by a Conservative minister named John Wise, with reference to building a meeting house and "capturing the Springs," claiming that they abided the just decision of the court to which the Conservatives had appealed and which gave them possession of the springs in question.

Among its correspondence is E. Brumbaugh of Swanton, O., who takes the position that Christians should not vote. Also an article from D. P. Saylor, Double Pipe Creek, Maryland, a Conservative leader, who takes the position that the "G. B. Brethren would do well to place an inscription over their pulpits that any one who does not conform to the order and style of dress common to the general Brotherhood should not be allowed to preach in this stand. Not to be put up to be looked at but *rigidly enforced*."

John P. Miller and Christian Miller of Stark county, O., publicly announce that they can no longer endure the deviations in the Conservative church and want to unite with the church they first joined. There are other things in the correspondence department that we may notice in a later issue of the EVANGELIST.

Their Annual Meeting will be held this year "on the farm of brother John Filburn, two miles south of Brown's station, Miami county, O., on the I. B. & W. R. W."

Notice is given of a dissolution of partnership between Eld. James Quinter, of Huntingdon, Pa., and Eld. Henry Davy, in the publishing of the Book of Minutes. Elder Davy securing the sole right of the copyright for a consideration of $50.

The Old Ruts.

Last week a correspondent inquired for some one to give instructions on how to write for the EVANGELIST, so that the people might be edified, and that writers may not waste their time in vain efforts.

This is a weighty and most important question, considered in connection with the surroundings in which we now dwell, and a question that is difficult to answer.

Our conception of just what will interest and instruct our readers and redound to the glory of God, may be faulty, and not always applicable to the situation; and the productions of our correspondents may be open to a similar objection.

There is one thing we should all aim to do; and that is, to steer clear of old ruts as much as possible. The most worthy theme may be ground down and worn away to a degree that will make it liteless as a basis for literary productions. There should be a reaching after new and original thought; a line that is not already black from the accumulated dirt of constant handling.

There has been too much one-idealism about religious literature and controversial theology in the different periods that are already past. In one age every believer of the argumentative tendency, was talking and writing about the Trinity; in another the time the Passover should be observed filled the storehouse of religious investigation and supplied material for endless research and ingenuity; creature service followed in the procession, transubstantiation had its day, the schoolmen's period is no more; and lastly, the irrepressible hat invites us to a contest, bitter, relentless, and we dare say, unprofitable.

It is a truth, painful to reflect over, that some of us are so bound to the old ruts, that we cannot, apparently, write upon any subject outside of the Church difficulties, the German Baptists and Annual Meeting.

It is now time that we are preparing to lift ourselves out of that situation. The Brethren Church is no longer a venture nor an experiment—it is an actuality, and the defensive position should be partly abandoned, at least, and an order to go forward issued.

Lessons of importance can be drawn from the events of the past to warn those who follow in our foot steps; but they will probably never be needed. The next advance of the adversary of souls, will be in a new and hitherto and unknown form, and should the Christian not be properly warned, there is danger of being injured by the fiery darts of satan.

Brethren, make it a study to write more about Christ and the good work, and leave the dead bury the dead.

Our New Office.

We announced our removal last week, but as last week's issue was made up several days in advance, that announcement was more anticipatory than real. We are still somewhat in the transitory state, and the office itself needs considerable changing to make it what we desire. The building in which we now are is known as the Centennial building and is owned by brethren H. K. Meyers and David Bailey, and the store above which our rooms are located, is conducted under the firm name of Meyers, Bailey and Billheimer. We occupy the second floor with our sanctum facing the street in the main business part of the town and consider it a pleasant location.

A Mormon has made the interesting discovery that it would be impossible for all men to be polygamists, because the sexes are born in almost equal numbers; therefore, it is not, he believes, an institution of God.

It seems there are progressives and conservatives even among the Mormons. The former are favorable to the abrogation of polygamy and the latter oppose the measure. The Mormon Church organ takes the conservative side of the question and bewails the apostacy of its progressive brethren.

Parson Burchard, the man who made himself notorious during the late political campaign by making use of the phrase, Rum, Romanism and Rebellion, lately delivered a lecture in New York on the "Men I have met," in which he gave the following definition for "bigot": "One who stands on a segment of truth, and never looks around the circle."

We have been informed through a Conservative source, that Elder Jesse Calvert has been doing a good work for the German Baptists in the Sandy church Ohio, restoring peace and union and baptizing nine at one meeting appointment. We have not heard upon what basis the peace and union was founded, and can therefore not predict as to its permanent endurance. If it was made on the basis of the Gospel as practiced by the Brethren it will last.

In reply to Mrs. H. W. Wixom, Mendota, Ill., we say:

1. We baptize by Trine Immersion.
2. By a forward action.
3. We have no further discipline than the Bible.
4. We hold our communion public.